

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
Bureau of Customs and Border Protection**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 19, 2003

Smuggler Assaults Border Patrol Agent With Rock

Suspect Rams Vehicle into Steel Fence With 30 on board

YUMA, Ariz. – A suspect in the process of smuggling illegal aliens into the United States rammed his vehicle into the steel border fence and assaulted a Border Patrol Agent with a rock during the arrest process. The agent received minor injuries and the suspect was subsequently arrested.

At 11 a.m. today, agents from the Yuma Border Patrol Sector were patrolling near Andrade, Calif. An agent observed two vehicles enter the United States illegally near the border fence and the All-American Canal, northwest of Algodones, Baja California. The driver of the first vehicle, who was transporting 24 illegal aliens, spotted agents shortly after the entry and returned to Mexico. Mexican authorities intercepted the vehicle in Mexico and arrested the suspected smuggler. The driver of the second vehicle, a 2002 Ford Pickup, was transporting 30 illegal subjects into the U.S. Instead of returning to Mexico after observing the agents, the suspect crashed his truck into the steel fence that separates the United States and Mexico.

The agents immediately responded to the scene. One agent checked the condition of the passengers while another agent attempted to arrest the driver. The agent immediately moved in to secure the suspect driver, however the suspect picked up a ten pound rock and attempted to hit the agent. The suspect then picked up a baseball-sized rock and hit the agent in the head. A second agent responded to the assaults and the suspect was taken into custody. None of the people in the pickup were injured during the crash.

The suspect driver was arrested for assault on a federal officer, alien smuggling, and endangerment. The suspect and the others were taken to the Yuma Border Patrol Station for further investigation.

-USBP-